

DOCTOR *LUCAS*'s LETTER

TO SUCH OF THE

CITIZENS and ELECTORS of DUBLIN,

As have preserved their freedom, independence, and integrity. Written in 1758, and reprinted from the *St. James's CHRONICLE*, on his junction with Mr. DUNN on the present election. Recommended to every elector, to be considered seriously before he votes.

AFTER all I have done, all I have suffered, in reviving your sense of virtue and civil liberty; it must grieve me to find room for suspecting any backslidings among you.

From the time I found your generous bosoms glowing with sentiments of freedom and loyalty, equal to any that Rome or Greece could boast, at the height of their glory; from the time I found you animated by such noble patriot spirits, as might adorn and save a falling state; I dare ask you, Was there one so blind among you as not to see, that your concerns, your honour, and your interest, were dearer to me than my own? There was not one thinking citizen or subject insensible, that in asserting the rights and liberties of my fellow citizens, I lost my own; and that, while the most shameless of my persecutors were sensible, I did not transgress the laws of my country.

While you persevere in these principles, I must glory in my sufferings; and from the particular kindness you shewed me since I left you, I shall ever think myself in duty bound to watch over your concerns, and be ready to answer all legal calls to serve you, at the hazard of my best prospects in life.

Had not a certain obstacle still remained against your electing me into the seat, into which another upon my banishment was forced; I should think you much changed, or that you judged me so. My conscience acquits me of the latter. And had I just room to think you fallen away, I should only look upon all obligations to you as absolutely cancelled; but I should disdain to bear about me those marks of your much-prized favour, which you from the most generous motives conferred on me, with the freedom of your guilds. I should not even cast your boxes, as one of your late governors has those he got from yours, and other cities, into the meanest table furniture, but would deface and return the filthy bullion to its sordid owners.

But such a time of trial has not yet come; I am willing to find out an apology for you; and I still must think I have hit upon the right; till the votes to disqualify me were rescinded, or, by the calling of a new parliament, dissolved, it might be imprudent, if not dangerous to name me a candidate for your city.

Yet in these critical, troublesome times, who are set up among you candidates for the great and important office? How shall I name them to you?—an alderman and a lawyer!

The alderman, it must be confessed, is, in his private station, an honest, good-natured man, possessed of many social virtues. But he obtained city offices from the hands of the usurping faction, that, against the sense of all good men, against the pronounced judgment of your house of commons and privy-council, and that of our sovereign and his privy-council here, have assumed to themselves titles and powers inconsistent with law, and subversive of the franchises of the citizens. How zealously this honest gentleman supported what his faction assumed, from his first appointment to the place of sheriff and master of the works, or city engineer, till he was enveloped in ill-gotten purple and fox-skin; and thence, till a subdivision of the same infamous, hateful faction declined electing him to the mayoralty, you must all know. Upon this disappointment, indeed, you saw him piqued, somewhat angry with their high mightinesses at the board; but was he not soon after appeased? Had he not some sugar-sops given him? Did he not grow a good boy, and take up and eat his rejected bread and butter, upon getting his purple changed to a scarlet gown?—He is too honest to deny it.

But, say you, he is no longer an alderman; he has resigned his place, thrown off his gown, and become a free citizen? Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Can you be such dupes as to imagine, that a wolf in sheep's clothing, or an alderman uncased of his fox-skin, are altered in their nature?—You begin to have extraordinary faith in converts.—O! for one faithful shepherd's dog to watch and to rouse the sluggish sleeping flock, before the enemy devour them!

You will answer for his capacity too, for this arduous task! Make it out.—He is better than most of those you have chosen for you.—So, indeed, he had need. Heaven send you some representatives better than their predecessors, or your case must grow daily worse and worse! You know, I admired this man's humanity, when he and I were irreconcilable antagonists in the common-council. I love him for his private virtues. I oppose him still, as a disappointed alderman, and as a man void of the qualifications requisite for your member. Judge for yourselves, and you must do likewise.

The other candidate is a gentleman of the robe, of which perhaps you think there is some scarcity in the house of commons already. The lawyers to be sure are very honourable men.

But give this gentleman his due. He has preserved a good private character, and has the reputation of sense and knowledge in his profession, though he has got the rank he holds at the bar, from his alliance with the man that refused to admit you to try your contest with the aldermen by due course of law; and though he be nearly allied to some of the dignified chiefs of the tyrannical board, of most miserable memory, and has been promoted by their worthy successors to the place of recorder, against the sense of the commons and citizens, if Fame speaks truth.

Who sets this gentleman up? Who are interested in having their creature elected in opposition to you? Who wish to multiply lawyers and creatures of the ministry in the house of commons? Is it for your interest such a man should be chosen? Is his eminence in his profession any security for his good behaviour?—Ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Ask yourselves.

Will you tell me, you are hard set for a choice! You named one, and he declined standing Candidate.—I remember when you knew there was no necessity of consultations; that you had a right to elect any man without his consent or knowledge, and that the man so elected was bound to serve you, if he lived in the kingdom. Why did you not do this? This has London the virtue to do; tho' alas! but in one instance. In this one instance, she may be worthy of your imitation. I wish I could say more.

We at this distance, who remember the glorious struggles you made for the freedom of election, in the memorable year 1749, who saw you choose a member upon the true principles of your policy, in spite to all the power of your enemies; who saw you strenuously labour to support your member and his election, by all the most generous and noble means; and when you were foiled, dignify the minority with the most honourable medals, to commemorate your sense of their virtue and loyalty, as well as your own freedom and independence; we who see this injured man labouring with indefatigable industry in promoting your trade and interest, though he has been forced to remove his habitation from among you: We, I say, wonder at finding no mention of this citizen's name among the resolutions of those associations who named the other Candidates.

This man was once an object of your high regard; as a proof, you chose him your representative. Those that persecuted him and you, or you and him, could attempt no objection to him, but the principles and connections, by which he gained his seat. Upon or since his election, has he done any thing repugnant to those principles? Any thing to forfeit your regards? Try him fairly, condemn him not unheard. We, who have but a distant prospect of your affairs, saw him make glorious struggles to maintain your rights. He kept his seat and exerted himself in it, while truth or reason had any weight; and when he was forced to give it up, he retired with dignity. Is there then, my friends, any obstacle to your re-electing a man, that has proved his qualification to serve you? A man, on whom your election already fell, and who ought to be looked upon by every one of you as his representative De Jure? Is it not indispensably incumbent on you to re-elect, to reinstate this injured man, and by so doing, heal the wounds given you in his dismissal? Is there any man within your option or reach, so conversant in all your affairs, whether relative to your franchises or to your trade? Is there any man among you, who has done so much for the restoring and maintaining the one, or extending and improving the other, as James Digges La Touche? For my part, if he has done nothing to forfeit your favour, I look upon you as pre-engaged by every consideration to re-elect him. Were I free to give a voice, he should have mine upon these considerations, more in respect to you, than to him. I thought it my duty to offer you these my sentiments. I wish you to act consistently, steadily in all things; and to prove that the principles, which actuated you, when I knew you, still prevail in all your conduct.

You know I never solicited you for any man, even for myself. I recommend these matters to your cool thoughts, and wish you to judge for yourselves, with becoming freedom and independence.

Mr. Digges, I see offers you his service, and declares himself ready to attend your calls. This, in mine opinion, leaves you without excuse; and therefore I make no doubt, whatever a few forward citizens might have done, the whole body collected will support their own interest and dignity. Yours,

London, Feb. 21, 1758.

C. LUCAS.